

Sharon Santo - English Transcript

Good morning. [NON-ENGLISH SPEECH]. I am so happy to be here today. As David said, I have 10 years experience with teaching English as a second language. My husband is an English learner. I consider myself to be a Spanish learner. And my daughter participates in a dual language program. So English learners are very close to my heart. And I love the families that are so supportive of both their children and their teachers. And I hope I can make this day even better for you.

And there we go. So I work at Region 20. And I work with our Title III coordinator Rickey Santellana. And part of the work that I do with them is to help maintain the Texas English learner portal. So this is a website that was created specifically to help teachers and educators, as well as parents and families, find resources and ideas for how they can support and help our students' English language grow.

So for you as a parent or a family member, you would come to this txel-- T-X-E-L-- .org. And click on the Parents and Families tab. Now, some of you might be thinking, oh my goodness, it's all in English. Have no fear. We do have this lovely Google Translate button up here, and you can choose from a variety of languages.

For example, we have a nice Vietnamese audience today. So you can change the website to read in Vietnamese, or you can choose to have it read in Spanish. I will remind you that this is Google translated, so there might be some weird translations every now and then. But we hope that that helps you receive more information and more support for how you can help the English learner in your family or you yourself as an English learner.

So the website is divided into a few different areas for parents and families. The first thing you will see are three main pages. Supporting My Child-- we'll go more into detail with this, but this is going to be focusing on resources that you can use for your children from elementary school all the way up through high school.

The Family Supports is going to focus on you as a parent or as a family member. We have wonderful resources to help you find what you need both to support your child and to support yourself. And finally, we have the Student Resources. So for those of you who have older students in high school, this is where they can go to find information about how to start or prepare for their future careers after high school or to prepare for higher education, going to college.

Well, since this popped up, we will go ahead and take a look at this. When you see these ratings pop up, that is a good chance for you to give us feedback about what you would like to see. We hope we've gathered a lot for you, but we are always looking for more feedback from you as our audience to say, hey, I really would like to know more about this or how can I specifically address this issue. So when you see that little pop-up, please, go ahead and give us a click. And let us know how we're doing.

So after we go from our three main tabs, we'll come down here and we have our announcement section. These announcements will tell you everything that has been going on or more resources that we have found. So for example, hey, we have our lovely event for today.

There was a new resource, Early Childhood Texas for those children zero to five. So even before they go to school, we have some resources for them as well as some other newsletter announcements. This carousel has an abundance of websites that are outside the TXEL portal.

So for example, we have this Early Childhood Texas Resources. We have graduation tool kits. So for what you need to know as a parent or your kids need to know, all of that is there.

We have information on if your students are also a part of the special education program or a part of the gifted and talented program and even some helpful websites for you at home, whether it's finding an internet source or different resources for your students to learn at home. Below here, we have a wonderful section. This is actually our newsletter section.

We should have a newsletter coming out in May, and it will be a guide to help you understand those star test score sheets as well as the TELPAS test results. I know that they can be a little confusing, so hopefully that will guide you once you get those in June or maybe early July.

Below that, these videos are going to be your best friend. So these videos, this video right here is the process for serving English learners. This is going to be your guide to understand how is my child a part of an ESL program or a bilingual program. How do they leave that program? How does it all work? This will guide you as a parent through that process as well as this little video here. Nice and short, it's kind of a much smaller version of what I'm doing today. And it just helps guide you through the TXEL portal.

So let's come up here just to take a look at this Supporting My Child page. And as we scroll down, we can see some resources for parents. So for example, let's click on just one of these. We have this sheet for how you can help support your child. Remember, we can always change these to a different language, but sometimes you might want to go to one of the links that are outside our page.

And when we have that, you might go to an English site that doesn't have your language. What I want you to remember is that you can always right click and see this button here. It says translate to English, but maybe we don't want English. I actually had a lot of students that spoke Arabic, so maybe we can choose the Arabic option.

Once we click this Translate button, the whole website is in Arabic. So we have this option even if you're outside the TXEL portal. You will have the opportunity, as long as it's a website, to translate it into a language that is easier for you.

All right, let's go ahead and switch this one back to English, right? There we go. All right, so as we move down, we see links for parents, OK? We did separate these links. And when we say things for parents, it's links for you to maybe show your children, your students. And we do have them separated by the age level.

So for example, for elementary school from kindergarten to fifth grade or for middle school, these are great websites that your students can use to help them work on growing their English as well as for high school. So we do have a variety of websites. And each website does have a little bit of a description below it, so you kind of know based on what you need, what you can find. And at the bottom, we have that lovely video again mostly because it is so valuable to you as a parent to understand the process.

So below that, rather than a video format, we have program brochures. So for example, we have an ESL program brochure. So this is going to show you the chart of how they are identified starting with a home language survey and an assessment. And you can scroll down here and find the rest of the information. Have no fear. We also have it in Spanish and in Vietnamese.

Below this, once again, it's your rights as a parent. We want to make sure that you feel confident in the education that your student is receiving in Texas. So please, read over your right as a parent and the decisions that you can make that you believe are in the best interest of your child.

We also have some great information for pre-K students, how they can qualify for pre-K as an English learner, as well as the identification process for them. And finally, we all love those state tests that happen each spring. They can be sometimes overwhelming because a lot of times you'll hear teachers or administrators talk about the NWEA map or the STAAR or the TELPAS or the EOC. These links here will guide you to pages and PDFs that can help explain each test and hopefully ease some of those fears for you.

All right, so now we're going to go into this Family Supports section. It's not quite as long, but one of our most popular features is in this section. And as we scroll down, we see the Adult Education and Literacy Providers.

So we also call this the TCall map. This isn't maintained by our website, but it is such a wonderful resource that anyone can come in here. And let's say we want to find English sources for-- I think this is Bexar County. It's a little small for me. Oh, here we go. It popped up. We're going to click on Bear County. And this website will tell us where you can find adult ESL websites. Once again, if you don't speak or if you're not literate in English, please don't worry. You can right click, come down here to Translate. And you can always choose your different languages.

Now, I will say that I am using Google Chrome. So if you're using another browser, Safari, Firefox, something like that, the way to translate might be just a little bit different. So this is a wonderful, wonderful resource that we want parents and family members to be aware of because across the state of Texas there are classes, free English classes, for you to work on your own English language development. We also have the county list down here. So if it's a little hard finding your county, we always have it listed here as well. And let's go back to that Parents and Families page.

And finally, we have our student resources. So if you remember, this is the page that's actually focused on older students themselves, those students in high school, to come in and find what they need. So we do have a few websites that might just be fun for them or fun English games and such, but we also have preparing for the next steps.

So for example, we have the FAFSA and TASFA. So these are the federal aid or Texas aid forms that your student would need to fill out if they wanted some sort of aid to go to college, to get that money to go to college. So this is how they would apply. Once again, we always know we can translate to a different language.

Then we have a very, very long list of scholarships. Now, we don't necessarily have the dates that the scholarships are due on our website because many of these links actually have 20, 30, 40 different scholarships listed on them. We did try to have some description.

So for example, if your child is interested in a STEM degree, Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics, this is a great place for them to find many different scholarships. There's also scholarship information for DACA recipients or recipients that are in the foster program, that are bilingual, that are homeless or formerly homeless, refugees, immigrants, across the board.

What we don't want to happen is that our students who are motivated and want to get that education, we don't want them not to be able to go to college just because of the cost. So please have them take a look at this scholarship section. There's always time. And many scholarships you can actually apply as a sophomore in high school or a junior in high school. Always start early.

And finally, we have our workforce support services. So for those students who aren't necessarily interested in going to a university or to a community college and want to enter that workforce right away,

we have Career One Stop, Texas Workforce Commission, and Work In Texas. So these are large resources.

For example, the Texas Workforce Commission, they have classes for technology in here. They have job fairs. Anything your heart could desire when it comes to finding a career or improving your skills for a career, they have that option in here.

So that wraps up the Parents and Families page. There is one other page that I want to show you. And that is the Community Partners page. So you can see our main menu up here. You want to come over here and click the Community Partners.

A lot of the resources from the Parents and Families page are really focused on the education and English development of both students and parents. The past few years have shown us all challenges that we have had to work through. And I know that some people struggled greatly and continue to struggle. So I want you to be aware of the community partners.

We do have one section that is all on adult education, so adult ESL classes. There was one-- the Tech Boomers. So if you're a little bit behind on your tech skills, you can learn some more technical skills that you would use. Or if you need to get that GED or a high school equivalent diploma, we have this link right here.

But as we move down, you'll see there's more links specifically for careers and for college, but even for health and housing. So especially with the current situation, you might need to find some sort of health care, health care plan. Or maybe your family, your student might be struggling with their emotional well-being with their mental health. We do have these links here. If you're struggling with food insecurity, we also have links to Feeding America.

And at the end, we have housing and safety. So if there's a situation where you're having to move in between different homes, you have that instability of where you're living, please take a look. There's disaster assistance, homeless education, a lot of different resources here for you. And finally-- the legal services. So if you need help as far as immigration or finding a lawyer or completing your process, we have this section here for you as well.

So to finish up today, I do want to point out that we have this. Oh, I almost forgot. We have this lovely green button right here that is Subscribed Today. Now, when you click on this, this is actually registering you. You can register as a parent or family member. Oh, I should also do this and in Spanish or Vietnamese.

So you can register as a parent, put your email address in here. And you will receive emails from us about new resources that are coming up, or maybe you even heard about this conference today from an email that we sent. So we do always try and inform you of new activities or events, and we'd love to hear from you.

The other place that I would like to show you is this contact us. And the reason being is, like I said at the beginning, we want to hear from you. I know that we do have a lot of resources on this site.

But if you feel like we are missing something, if you want, hey, I would like to have a video explaining the TELPAS test or something like that, please let us know. We are always looking for projects and activities that will help you as a parent or a family member, and we really want your feedback. So please, you can come over here to the Quick Links and the Contact Us. And you would go to the Parents and Family section and let us know how we can do better for you.